

Campus birdlife of Netaji Subhas Mahavidyalaya **A compiled report till December 2021**

Gomati district in Tripura has a wide variety of habitats ranging from forests to hills, from rivers and streams to wetlands, lakes and large water reservoirs, from agricultural fields to orchards and gardens and from household backyards to open institutional campuses and it is also migratory corridor for many birds falling under the **Central Asian Flyway**. Bird reports from the district in terms of species count is close to 300 out of a total of nearly 400 species reported from the state. Out of the 67 ebird hotspots from Tripura enlisted on ebird portal, Netaji Subhas Mahavidyalaya (spelt as Nethaji Subhash Mahavidyalaya in the ebird website), Udaipur, Tripura is also one and one of the first few to be declared as a hotspot. As per ebird records there is only one checklist submitted to ebird by December 2021 but the actual number of species observed is much higher. This fact is also supported by the fact that this college is in the vicinity of Tepania Eco park, Khupilong Ashram which extend to the Radhakishorepur reserve forest and not too far from Gomati river and Sukhsagar wetland thus falling in the intersection of flightpaths of many birds. This indicates that reporting on ebird is a fairly recent phenomenon in the state and one that is not very popular with birders in the state so far. The campus of Netaji Subhas Mahavidyalaya is primarily an open area and is surrounded by trees both inside and outside the campus. Some of the trees are extremely important for frugivorous birds viz *Trema orientalis*, *Ficus rumphi*, *Albizia lebbeck*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Monoon longifolium*, *Magnolia grandiflora*, *Mimusops elengi* etc while others provide resting places and shade. Grass species of the campus provide food in the form of seeds and nesting material. Birds are also attracted to the insects that take refuge in the campus vegetation notably several Lepidoptera larvae. There are also a few waterbodies in close proximity to the campus attracting several birds dependent on water. This compilation will indicate the birds observed in and around the campus in terms of species count, frequency of visits, breeding cycles, campus residents, habitat preferences of birds as well as interaction between different bird species for food, nesting etc.

The following is the link to the only checklist of birds submitted to ebird from Netaji Subhas Mahavidyalaya before December 2021.

1. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S61947277>

Birds seen/heard in and around the campus of Netaji Subhas Mahavidyalaya, Udaipur, Tripura

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Family	Status	Comments
1	Little cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>	Phalacrocoracidae	Occasional	Seen in flight
2	Amur falcon	<i>Falco amurensis</i>	Falconidae	Occasional	Seen in flight
3	Crested serpent eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	Accipitridae	Rare	Seen in flight
4	Oriental honey buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>	Accipitridae	Rare	Seen in flight
5	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	Accipitridae	Occasional	Seen in flight

					and perch, heard calling
6	Unidentified eagle	<i>Aquila sp.</i>	Accipitridae	Incidental	Seen in flight
7	Black kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	Accipitridae	Occasional	Seen in flight
8	Brahminy kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>	Accipitridae	Occasional	Seen in flight
9	Red wattled lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	Charadriidae	Fairly common	Seen in playground, heard calling
10	Blue rock pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	Columbidae	Fairly common	Seen in flight, on buildingtops
11	Yellow footed green pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicoptera</i>	Columbidae	Fairly common	Difficult to see. Blend in foliage when perched
12	Orange breasted green pigeon	<i>Treron bicinctus</i>	Columbidae	Fairly common	Difficult to see. Blend in foliage when perched
13	Spotted dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	Columbidae	Fairly common	Seen perched and foraging
14	Rose ringed parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	Psittaculidae	Fairly common	Usually heard during flights
15	Red breasted parakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>	Psittaculidae	Fairly common	Usually heard during flights
16	Indian cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>	Cuculidae	Common	Call heard regularly during summer
17	Plaintive cuckoo	<i>Cacomantis merulinus</i>	Cuculidae	Common	Call heard regularly during summer
18	Asian koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopaceus</i>	Cuculidae	Common	Seen in fruit trees
19	Green billed malkoha	<i>Rhopodytes tristis</i>	Cuculidae	Occasional	Seen flying from one tree to another
20	Greater coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>	Cuculidae	Fairly common	Seen near thickets, calls heard
21	Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	Tytonidae	Fairly common	Seen after dark on buildingtops and calls from flight heard
22	Spotted owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>	Strigidae	Resident pair	Usually in a particular crevice of main

					building
23	Asian barred owlet	<i>Glucidium cuculoides</i>	Strigidae	Fairly common	Spotted near the <i>Ficus rumphi</i>
24	Collared scops owl	<i>Otus lettia</i>	Strigidae	Fairly common	Seen perched after dark
25	House swift	<i>Apus nipalensis</i>	Apodidae	Common	Seen in flight
26	Asian palm swift	<i>Cypsiurus balasiensis</i>	Apodidae	Common	Seen in flight
27	Indian hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	Upupidae	Occasional	Seen probing in the playground and surrounding areas
28	Indochinese roller/black billed roller	<i>Coracias affinis</i>	Coraciidae	Occasional	Seen perched on electric wires
29	Stork billed kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>	Alcedinidae	Occasional	Call heard and seen in passing flight
30	White throated kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	Alcedinidae	Fairly common	Seen perched in different places
31	Common kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Alcedinidae	Occasional	Heard and seen from biology building rooftop
32	Blue tailed bee eater	<i>Merops philippinus</i>	Meropidae	Common during summer	Seen in flight
33	Chestnut headed bee eater	<i>Merops leschenaulti</i>	Meropidae	Occasional	Seen in flight
34	Oriental pied hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros albirostris</i>	Bucerotidae	Rare	Seen on fruit trees
35	Lineated barbet	<i>Psilopogon lineatus</i>	Megalaimidae	Very common	Seen near foliage, heard frequently
36	Blue throated barbet	<i>Psilopogon asiaticus</i>	Megalaimidae	Rare	Seen near foliage, heard when calls
37	Coppersmith barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i>	Megalaimidae	Occasional	Calls heard more often than sight
38	Rufous woodpecker	<i>Microternus brachyurus</i>	Picidae	Rare	Seen in trees or identified with calls
39	Fulvous breasted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos macei</i>	Picidae	Less common than black rumped flameback	Seen foraging in trees. Seen in nest cavity once.

40	Black rumped flameback woodpecker	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	Picidae	Common	Calls heard and seen foraging in trees
41	Ashy woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>	Artamidae	Occasional	Seen in flight
42	Large cuckoshrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>	Campephagidae	Occasional	Seen in perch or flight emitting typical call
43	Common iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>	Aegithinadae	Occasional	Spotted with typical call
44	Brown shrike	<i>Lanius Cristaeus</i>	Laniidae	Occasional	Seen during winter
45	Long tailed shrike	<i>Lanius schach tricolor</i>	Laniidae	Occasional	Tricoloured subspecies seen during winter
46	Black drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	Dicruridae	Common	Seen in top perches
47	Black hooded oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	Oriolidae	Common	Seen hopping between braches and emitting typical call
48	White throated fantail	<i>Rhipidura albicollis</i>	Rhipiduridae	Rare	Seen in canopy from rooftops
49	Rufous treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	Corvidae	Common	Heard calling from trees
50	Large billed crow (eastern)	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos levillantii</i>	Corvidae	Common	Usually seen in flight. Sometimes seen mobbing the resident spotted owlets during dusk when the owlets come out
51	Cinereous tit	<i>Parus cinereus</i>	Paridae	Fairly common	Calls heard and seen foraging for insects and larvae
52	Red whiskered bulbul	<i>Pyconotus jocosus</i>	Pycnonotidae	Less common than Red-vented	Seen in trees
53	Red vented bulbul	<i>Pyconotus cafer begalensis</i>	Pycnonotidae	Common	Seen in parties upto eight
54	Common tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus</i>	Cisticolidae	Very common	More heard

		<i>sutorius</i>			than seen
55	Puff throated babbler	<i>Pellorneum ruficeps</i>	Pellorneidae	Rare	Calls heard from thickets
56	Indian white eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>	Zosteropidae	Rare	Seen in canopies and in flight from buildingtops
57	Common hill myna	<i>Gracula religiosa</i>	Sturnidae	Occasional during rains	Seen on fruit trees and distinctive call heard
58	Jungle myna	<i>Acridotheres fuscus</i>	Sturnidae	Very common	Seen in large numbers
59	Common myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	Sturnidae	Very common	Seen in numbers upto fifteen
60	Asian pied starling	<i>Gracupica contra</i>	Sturnidae	Very common	Seen in numbers upto ten. Nests in campus
61	Chestnut tailed starling	<i>Sturnia malabarica</i>	Sturnidae	Very common	Seen in large numbers. Nests in campus
62	Blue rock thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	Muscicapidae	Very rare	Seen perched on buildings
63	Oriental magpie robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	Muscicapidae	Common	Seen in various places in and around campus
64	Black naped monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>	Monarchidae	Rare	Seen in canopy
65	Grey headed canary flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	Stenostiridae	Rare	Seen in canopy during winter months
66	Golden fronted leafbird	<i>Chloropsis aurifrons</i>	Chloropseidae	Rare	Seen in fruit trees
67	Pale billed flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum erythrorhynchos</i>	Dicaeidae	Fairly common	Usually identified by calls during flight
68	Scarlet backed flowerpecker	<i>Dicaeum Cruentatum</i>	Dicaeidae	Less common than pale billed	Usually identified by calls during flight
69	Purple rumped sunbird	<i>Leptocoma zeylonica</i>	Nectariniidae	Occasional	Seen in trees and electric

					wires
70	Purple sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>	Nectariniidae	Occasional	Seen in trees and electric wires
71	House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Passeridae	Resident	Feeds, roosts, nests in campus
72	White rumped munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>	Estrildidae	Common	Nests in campus
73	Scaly breasted munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	Estrildidae	Common	Nests in campus
74	Lesser whistling duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	Anatidae	Occasional during winter	Seen in flight
75	Cinnamon bittern	<i>Ixobrychus cinnamomeus</i>	Ardeidae	Rare	Seen in flight
76	Indian pond heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	Ardeidae	Occasional	Seen in the playground
77	Cattle egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	Ardeidae	Not seen recently	Was occasionally seen earlier when people used to herd their cattle in campus which is prohibited now.
78	White breasted waterhen	<i>Amauornis phoenicurus</i>	Rallidae	Common	Specially heard from nearby waterbodies during rains from Biology building

Birds nesting in the campus

Of all the birds nesting in the campus the most common is the house sparrow occupying most ventilators of the main building and physical science building. The next notable nesting species is the chestnut tailed starling. The competition of house sparrows and chestnut tailed starlings for nest cavities is an interesting sight to watch. The sparrows get access to more ventilators because of their small size. The starlings on the other hand enjoy the advantage of their bigger body size in pushing sparrows out whenever they can manage to drill a bigger entrance in the ventilators. During the breeding season the begging calls of the nestlings are continuously heard in the corridors of these buildings. Scaly breasted munias and white rumped munias use the blades of tall grasses found in the campus to build nests in the space between the window panes and wired mesh of the library and also in medium heights of trees (viz nageswar, bakul, debdaru etc). loras, bulbuls and such other birds nest

in the shrub thickets beside the physical science building. White throated kingfishers have been observed trying to dig out nesting holes on the steep mud walls lining the college playground. Lineated barbets nest in the tree holes of dead branches which can be excavated easily and there is competition for existing holes both between same species and different species. Asian pied starlings nest on electric poles which can be openly seen and the calls of the nestlings are an unfailing indicator of the presence of the nest to oblivious passersby.

Threats to birds and measures to encourage birdlife in the campus

The main threats to birds in and around the campus are not much different from the general threats faced by birds elsewhere and are actually not less even if the campus provides some form of security. As the campus is a secured place birds find refuge here and the common birds are seen in more numbers inside the campus. Birdlife will be greatly benefitted if the College administration takes care of a few things as listed below.

1. Not blocking ventilators which provide indispensable nesting cavity.
2. Protect trees of the campus especially *Trema orientalis* which may be regarded as the most important tree for birds in many ways. Unfortunately this tree is regarded useless by many.
3. Stop burning of grass in campus.
4. Not to cut down thickets and shrubs during the breeding season and leave the thickets near the physical science building undisturbed which acts as a magnet to several bird and butterfly species.
5. Stop any trapper or hunter in the vicinity of the campus from harming birds.

Concluding remarks

This study has been done on campus with the help of several students (specially from physical science and biological science) from time to time who have shown interest in learning about birds. Some students have gained expertise in the field in due course and are involve in several bird monitoring events of the state from time to time. Students who have been very active in monitoring birds include Mr. Priyabrata Debnath of Zoology honours (University roll no. 1415010600) during 2014-2017, Mr. Abhranil Debbarma of Chemistry honours (University roll no. 1715000572) during 2017-2018, Mr. Diptanu Debnath of Zoology honours (University roll no. 1815000547) during January 2019 to December 2021, Mr. Diptanu Debnath of Zoology honours (University roll no. 1815000475) during January 2019 to May 2021 and Mr. Suman Das, B.Sc. Physical Science during 2019 till the end of 2021. A special thanks to Mr. Diptanu Debnath (University roll no. 1815000547), now an alumnus from Department of Zoology without whose help this compilation would have been difficult.

Date: 15.12.2021
Place: Udaipur

Dr. Krishnendu Das
15.12.2021
(Dr. Krishnendu Das)
Convenor,
Research and seminar committee
N.S. Mahavidyalaya
Udaipur Tripura